

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 934

By Johnson C

A RESOLUTION to honor and recognize Frances Sumner for forty years of service as the School Librarian at New Providence Middle School.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should pause to pay tribute to those citizens who, through their unflagging commitment to excellence in all endeavors, have distinguished themselves in their respective communities; and

WHEREAS, the State of Tennessee stands firmly committed to the education of our children; one catalyst for the enhancement of our students' future academic success is the promotion of reading at an early age, which results in a love for books and the knowledge that abounds from reading; and

WHEREAS, if a love of reading is firmly established during a child's youth, that child will be better prepared for the future: his or her scholastic achievements will increase, meaningful employment will be more readily available, and his or her ability to compete in the ever-growing global economy will be greatly enhanced; and

WHEREAS, Frances Sumner has touched every book that has been a part of the New Providence Middle School (NPMS) library, where she has served as librarian since the school opened forty years ago in 1966; and

WHEREAS, her sterling leadership is grounded in the sound principle that educational investment is instrumental to the community's well-being and long-term quality of life, and for this reason, she has been honored at New Providence Middle School's fortieth anniversary celebration; Principal Laura Barnett says Mrs. Sumner is the "matriarch of the school family," who, although she has been employed there for forty years, "has as much drive and energy as a brand new teacher."; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Sumner sincerely loves her work at the library, which to her is a “calling,” not simply a job. She believes the library exists to support the curriculum of NPMS, and always strives to make the jobs of the teachers easier; and

WHEREAS, she thinks of the NPMS students as her own children, and has served as a tremendous positive influence in many of their lives; Representative Curtis Johnson, then an eighth-grader, was one of Mrs. Sumner’s library aides the first year NPMS opened, and he credits her with imparting to him invaluable lessons about life, along with helping him to understand how to shelve books; and

WHEREAS, due to her longstanding and visible presence in the library, Mrs. Sumner possesses a wealth of information about NPMS; she is the one person who knows every historical element involving the school, and, as the custodian of such knowledge, keeps up with everyone who has ever passed through the building; and

WHEREAS, always stressing the importance of reading readiness, Frances Sumner says her job is to encourage a deep love of reading in students of every age, since, “they will be readers their whole lives, whether reading a map or instructions on a box of cake mix.” Her greatest hope is that she is teaching her students to think for themselves and be wise users of information; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Sumner’s dedication to excellence and to introducing children to books at an early age, thereby encouraging a lifelong love of reading, is clearly deserving of the respect, admiration, and commendation of this legislative body; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we hereby recognize and honor Frances Sumner of New Providence Middle School for forty years of meritorious service as the school librarian, and commend her for her untiring efforts to inspire children to love books and reading and to make reading fun, and extend to her our best wishes for a happy, successful future.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.